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SERMON

Collegiate-Church of Ripon.

THE
Dean of Ripon's
Thanksgiving-Sermon
UPON THE
Taking of N A M U R.

By Christopher Wynd, D.D.

And Dean of Ripon.

LONDON

Printed by The Office for the Bishop, in the Bishop's
Palace, Ripon.

THE
Dean of Ripon's

Thanksgiving-Sermon

UPON THE

Taking of N. W. U. R.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Collegiate-Church of Ripon,

O N

Sunday the 22^d of September, 1695.

Being the Day appointed for

A Publick Thanksgiving

F O R T H E

Reduction of the Town and Castle of *Namur*,
And the Preservation of his Majesties Person.

By *Christopher Wyvill*, D. D.
And Dean of *Ripon*.

Publiſh'd at the Request of some Friends.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Tbo. Warren* for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Bishops-
Head in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, 1695.

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S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Collegiate-Church of Ripon.

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Printed by Tho. Warton for Walter Ayscough, at the Bishop's
Head in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1695.

TO THE
Right Worshipful
THE
Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen,
And other
The Inhabitants of the Town of
RIPON.

Gentlemen,

THE reason of this Sermon's appearing in Print so long after the day on which you heard it Preach'd, was my unwillingness to publish it till I was prevail'd with to do it by some who thought it might be serviceable to the Present Government; and if it can obtain that end, I think it comes not out too late.

And I Dedicate it to you, as an Acknowledgment of the many great Civilities and Respects which I have had from you, who am

Gentlemen,

Your most Obliged
and Faithful Servant;

Christ, Wyvill.

TO THE
 Right Worshipful
 THE
 Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen,
 And other
 The Inhabitants of the Town of
 R I P O N.

Continued.
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th inst. in relation to the petition of the Seamen's appearing in
 Print is long after the day on which you
 should be presented, and my unwillingness
 to publish it till I was fully satisfied to do so in
 some who thought it might be favorable to the
 Present Government; and if it can obtain their
 aid, I think it cannot hurt one too late.
 And I desire it to go, as an abstract of the
 more of the many great Christian and Republican
 which I have had from you, who are
 Continued.

Your most Obedient
 and Loyal Servant

Christ. Wyll.

A S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Collegiate-Church of *Ripon*.

2 Sam. iii. 1.

*Now there was long War between the
House of Saul, and the House of Da-
vid : but David waxed stronger and
stronger, and the House of Saul waxed
weaker and weaker.*

THese words do give us a short account of a long War betwixt two great Families, and the different event it had in reference to each of them, tending to the exaltation of the one and the depression of the other.

David, a Man after God's own Heart, was by God's express Declaration (sufficiently made known to all the People) appointed to be King, after the Death of *Saul*, over all the Tribes of *Israel*; and accordingly, upon *Saul's* Death, he was forthwith Anointed into the Regal Office at *Hebron*, and acknowledged !

1 Sam. 11. 8. 2 Sam. 24. 9. knowledgeable as King by the Tribe of *Judah*; but the other Tribes (who did sometimes bear the name of *Israel* in distinction from that of *Judah*, even before the division of the Kingdom, in the days of *Jereboam*, I say the other Tribes) followed *Ishbosheth* the Son of *Saul*, whom *Abner* the Son of *Ner*, had set up in opposition to *David*, notwithstanding that he could not but know he derived his Title to the Crown from the immediate nomination of God himself; upon which there began a civil War betwixt the House of *David* and the House of *Saul*. But God was pleased so far to assert the cause of *David*, as to grant him Success over his Enemies; for *David* (as the Text tells us) *waxed stronger and stronger, but the House of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.*

How far we may judge of the righteousness of a Cause by the Success it hath, I shall take upon me to determine. Certain it is, that good Success is not always an Argument of a good Cause. How often have we known wicked Attempts, and the most horrid Villainies to thrive and prosper, whilst Just and righteous Undertakings have met with great Miscarriages, and have had improsperous Events? but when the Cause is apparently Just and Right, and then good Success attends it, we cannot but acknowledge that the hand of God is concern'd in it, we cannot but discern his Favour to it, and his Approbation of it; and yet from hence we must not conclude either that God disallows of a good Cause when he permits it to suffer, or that he approves of a wrong Cause when he grants it good Success. For as to the first Case, be the Cause of a People never so just and right on which they are engaged in War, yet he may permit them to suffer for their manifold Sins and

and Offences ; and as to the other Case, he sometimes grants Prosperity to men engaged in a wrong cause, on purpose to make them the Instruments of his just Wrath, in executing his Judgments on a sinful People. But now the Cause of *David* was undeniably just and right, for he sat on the Throne, by God's own express Appointment, and God so far prosper'd his Arms, as that he *waxed stronger and stronger*, whilst his Enemies *waxed weaker and weaker*.

I shall not make a parallel betwixt the War in my Text, and the War in which we of this Nation are engaged : for the Parallel will not hold good in every particular ; for the War in which we are engaged is not (God be praised) a Civil War, not a War betwixt two Families, or two Houses, within the same Land or Dominion, but betwixt two distinct and independent Kingdoms, betwixt Us and *France*, betwixt the Defender of the Faith, join'd in Confederacy with other Christian Princes and States of *Europe* on one side, and the Most Christian King, join'd with the Great Turk on the other. The Parallel therefore not exactly holding true, I shall wave it ; nor shall I any farther take notice of the story in my Text, than as it affords occasion to speak upon these four heads of Discourse ;

- I. *Concerning the lawfulness of War in general.*
- II. *Concerning the War in which we of this Nation are now engaged.*
- III. *Concerning the Success we have had, which gives occasion to this days Thanksgiving.*
- IV. *And lastly, Concerning the effect which that Success should in reason have upon us.*

Of these I shall speak in their order, through God's Blessing, with as much plainness and brevity as I can.

I. I shall speak concerning the lawfulness of War in general. Now it must be confess'd that it is a great unhappiness for any People to be engaged in War; for the Miseries attending it are great, and the event of it uncertain, and whether side soever gets the better, yet much blood may be spilt, many a brave Man may lose his Life in the quarrel, much of the Nations Treasure may be exhausted, many unforeseen Losses and Calamities may be the issue of the Victory. But yet it is as certain, that War is sometimes unavoidably necessary; in many cases, and upon certain occasions, it may be very lawful, and not repugnant to the profession of Christianity.

We cannot indeed with truth admit of that Principle which some of late Years have so greedily imbibed and spread abroad, viz. That *the state of Nature is a state of War*; as if Men were naturally Enemies unto Men; or as if one Man were become by nature a kind of a Wolf or a Tyger to another Man: For Man by original Creation was made a sociable Creature, and all Mankind by nature are inclin'd to Peace, Unity and Concord, and mutual Love and Kindness one with another. Some Men indeed may have by evil custom so far debauched and corrupted their nature, as that they may have contracted an habit of doing wrong and injury to others, and perhaps, take some delight in quarrellings and fightings; but to say or believe, that a disposition to such evil practices is originally implanted in humane nature, is not only to disparage and vilifie the noblest piece

piece of God's Creation, but to do despite unto, and to blaspheme God himself, who is the Author of our Being, and the Contriver of our Nature: An inclination therefore to fight, or to do such violence as may be the cause of War, proceeds not from nature, but from the corruption of it, and from a defection from that innocency wherein Man was at first Created. *From whence come Wars and fightings amongst you,* Jam. 4. 1. *saith St. James? Come they not hence, even from your Lusts which War in your members?* So long as there are different Passions, in Men ungoverned and unrestrain'd, so long there will be fightings in the World, Whilst Pride and Ambition, whilst desire of Power, and of enlarging Dominions, and thirst after Revenge, do rule in Mens hearts, it cannot well be otherwise but that Wars and Tumults will be rais'd. And although the state of Nature be not a state of War, yet it is agreeable to nature for a Nation, or Society of Men to defend themselves against violent Opposition, and even to repel injuries with force. When Rebellion or an Insurrection is rais'd in the Land, it is certainly lawful for the supream lawful Magistrate, to whom is committed the power of the Sword, to endeavour by force of Arms, when other means will not prevail, to quell and suppress it. When a Prince of an aspiring Spirit, armed with Power and Strength, shall set upon his Neighbours, threatening Ruine and Destruction to them, or do them any eminent Injury, or otherwise violate or invade their just Rights and Liberties, it is but reasonable, as well as lawful, for them to withstand his hostile attempts, and to betake themselves to their Arms in their own just Defence and Vindication; and if nothing else can reduce him to an advantageous and honourable Peace,

they may, if they can, compel him to it by offending him, and pull down the haughtiness of his Pride by the diminution of his Forces; and even to be upon the offensive part upon great and high provocations, is as allowable as the defensive. This we know to be practised, not only in our days, and in most parts of the World, but even in times of old, and is justified by the Example of Gods own People the *Israelites*, throughout the History of the Old Testament.

Even *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, a Man of most exemplary Piety, as well as of great Wisdom, when he had heard of the spoil of *Sodom*, by the four Kings that had set themselves against it, and that *Lot*, his Brother's Son, was taken Captive by them, he arm'd his own trained Servants, and with what other Forces he could get, he pursued them, he fought them, and beat them, he recovered the spoil and set *Lot* at liberty; which fact, although he had not God's express Command for it, yet met with God's Acceptance and Approbation; for immediately after this Victory, *Melchizedeck*, the Priest of the Most High God, met him in his return with the spoil, and blessed him in the name of God, saying, *Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine Enemies into thine hand.*

Gen. 14.
19, 20.

And when the Children of *Israel*, under the Conduct of *Moses* and *Joshua*, had fought the *Amalekites* and beaten them, although they had not the Command of God for so doing, yet they afterwards had his Approbation of it: and in the 20th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, he gives his people general and perpetual rules to be observed in waging War, declaring thereby

Exod. 17.

thereby his allowance of it upon some accounts, although it hath not his Especial Command.

Neither is there any thing in the Christian Religion that forbids it, but rather some things that do very much favour it, and makes it lawful for Christians, upon good occasions, to go to War, and to be engaged in it. *St. Paul* exhorts us to pray, as for all men, so particularly for Kings, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty; but how can a quiet and peaceable Life be obtained, unless it be lawful for them to make use of the Sword, against the disturbers of our Peace, and the hinderers of our Quiet? and accordingly we find in *Tertullian*, that the Primitive Christians prayed for the Heathen Emperours, that they might have faithful Souldiers and Victorious Armies; and many of the ancient Christians who lived nearest the time of our Saviour, and of his Apostles, and who therefore may be presumed to know our Lord's mind very well as to this matter, did serve as Souldiers in the Wars of the Emperours under whom they lived, which we may imagine they would never have done, had they thought it had been contrary to the profession of their Religion.

We are indeed, by the Gospel of Christ, obliged to love our Enemies, but that lays no restraint upon us from going to War against them; we may love them, even then when we are fighting with them, *i. e.* Love their Souls, and wish well unto their better and Eternal State. We are commanded to forgive Injuries, and to put up Affronts, not to revenge our selves, not to retaliate wrong with wrong, but to overcome evil with good. But these Commands and Prohibitions concern only private Persons in their private

private Capacities, and cannot be construed to extend to publick Societies, or the united body of a Nation.

Besides, we may observe, that St. *John Baptist*, who was a Person under the strictest rigour of a spiritual Life, a Fore-runner of our Saviour, and sent on purpose to prepare men for the reception of the Gospel, and who gave instructions of Life to all that resorted to him; when the Souldiers, amongst others, came to take his Counsel, and asked him what they should do, did not bid them leave that course of life they were then engaged in, but only *to do no violence, to accuse none falsely, and to be content with their wages.* He left them still the use of their Arms, and only forbid them the abuse of their Power. And *Cornelius*, who was a Centurion of a Band of Souldiers under the Roman pay, when he was made a Christian by St. *Peter*, did still continue a Centurion, and had no directions given him to lay down his Commission.

Luke 3.
14.

As for that famous Prophecy, which without doubt relates to the Church of Christ, and foretells the happiness of the World upon his coming into it, namely, that *men should beat their Swords into Plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks; that Nation should not lift up Sword against Nation, and that they should not learn War any more;* there are these two things that may be said to it; First, That it may be understood conditionally, that such indeed would assuredly be the happy state of the World, if all Men in it would embrace the Christian Religion, and live up to the Rules and Duties of it; for that would keep them from doing any wrong or injury, and consequently there would be no occasion for Wars,

Is. 2. 4.
Mich. 4. 3.

Wars, but an universal and perpetual Peace should over-spread the Earth. Or, *secondly*, That we are still to expect the accomplishment of it, that it still remains to be fullfill'd, as do also some others which concern the state of Christ's Church upon Earth; and therefore considering the present state of the World, we cannot from that Prophecy rationally conclude, that War is absolutely unlawful.

To this we may also add, that if our Blessed Lord had ever design'd to make Warfare Criminal, and to forbid it wholly to his Disciples and Followers, we may be sure that he would some where or other, have given us a plain Declaration of his Mind in the case, and have forbidden it us in plain, and express, and intelligible words; which being he hath no where done, we cannot but think them very rash, and their Censure highly culpable, who condemn the use of Arms amongst Christian; or that from our Saviours Command to *St. Peter*, to put up his Sword (which he did on purpose to give a check to private revenge) do infer that it was his Mind, that none who profess his Gospel, should upon any account be engaged in War.

Wherefore, to conclude this point, as it may be lawful for private Persons to go to Law, and to appeal to the chief Magistrate, and the Courts of Justice, which is commonly the last, and the only way of deciding the Controversies that may arise betwixt one Man and another, so it may be lawful for one Nation to go to War with another, and to appeal to the Sword, when the differences betwixt them cannot otherwise be determined: And the lawfulness of levying War, and of being engaged in it upon accounts that are just and weighty, and when there is the Authority of the chief

chief Magistrate for it, hath been agreed upon in all Ages, and by all Religions; if we think otherwise, we shall condemn the actions of those ancient and noble Worthies, who are mention'd with honour in the 11th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and recorded to Posterity for their Warlike and Heroick Deeds, *who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, escaped the edge of the Sword, out of weakness became strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens.* In a word, if we either say or think that the use of Arms, and the military employment is absolutely inconsistent with the profession of the Gospel, what is it but to expose the Lives and Fortunes of Christians, as a prey to the rage and fury of the Enemies of the Christian Church and Faith? And thus having considered the lawfulness of War in general,

II. I come now, in the second place, to speak somewhat concerning the War which we of this Nation are now engaged in; concerning which I have this to say, that it is as Just and as lawful a War as ever any People were concern'd to manage; if we consider either the Enemies against whom, or the causes for which, we fight.

First, As for our Enemies they are such as are the most inveterate and implacable Enemies of our Peace and Religion, who at first began the War upon us, who invaded his Majesties Kingdom of *Ireland*, and made sad havock there, and would still have done more, had they not by the Blessing of God upon our Arms, been beaten off, who have often threatned *England* with an Invasion, who are perfect haters of our Church and Nation, and upon all occasions do
seek

seek our ruine and destruction. We are engaged against a Prince, the Ruler of those our Enemies, who is become a Scourge and a terrour to all that are round about him, who hath made his Will a Law, who persecutes Christians whilst he is in League with the *Mahometans*, who hath made War upon his Neighbours without cause, and enlarged his Dominions without right, and seeks after an Universal Monarchy to bring all *Europe* into Slavery; who carries Tyranny and Oppression, Injustice and Cruelty, Fire and Desolation wheresoever he conquers. Which things when we seriously consider, we cannot but stand amaz'd at those amongst our selves, who either with in their hearts, or dare speak with their mouths, that they would have, those our Enemies, to get the better of us, who can rejoice and exult at any little advantage they hear the Enemy hath gain'd, and would willingly have it believed to be greater than it is, and do magnifie it to excess on purpose to discourage the Nation, and endeavour to make a Mountain of a Molehill. What could these persons gain, supposing that our Enemies should really become Victors and Conquerors over us? What if for our great Sins and Provocations against Heaven, God should permit our Enemies to come within our own Bawels, and with Fire and Sword to rage here as they have done in other places, and to make an entire Conquest of our Land? Could these Persons, who are to great Well-wishers to 'em, expect to be exempted from the common Calamity? Could they think to escape that ruine which they wish to their own Fellow-Subjects, or be excused from that Dragooning which makes no distinction of Persons? Could they be glad to see the Land of their Nativity

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turn'd into an *Aceldama* of Blood? or rejoice to have the English Nation become Tributary to *France*? But Blessed be God, that there is now as little ground for our fearing of this, as they have to hope that their unnatural wishes or desires may take effect. However this shews us what great reason we have to be united against those our Enemies, and both to pray and to endeavour all we can, that they may never prevail against us, nor triumph in the ruine of us and our Posterity.

II. *As for the causes for which we fight*; they are as just and as honourable as can be; for we fight not for trifles, for small or inconsiderable things, but for things of the greatest moment and concern, for our Lives and Liberties, for the defence of our just Rights our Laws and Privileges, for the preservation of our Religion against the most violent attempts for its Subversion; in a word, for the Vindication of the common liberties of Mankind, invaded and trampled on by Tyranny and Oppression. And these are certainly as justifiable causes of a War as ever any Nation had or can have. From the consideration of which give me leave, I beseech you, to make these few Inferences;

(1.) That we are from hence obliged freely and willingly, chearfully and contentedly, without murmuring and complaining, to contribute and pay whatsoever the Wisdom of the Great Council of the Nation shall think fit to lay upon us as a Tax, for the carrying on of this War with Vigour, till God by his Providence shall see fit to put an happy end to it. This methinks is as little as we can do, who sit at home and enjoy the great Blessing of Peace, whilst others

others our Fellow-Subjects, are hazarding their Lives abroad in fighting for us: and surely we may be very well pleased and contented, if by parting with our Money, we can keep the War at a distance from us.

(2.) That it is not only lawful but necessary for those who are able, and whose occasions and manner of Life will permit them (may, perhaps it may be their duty too) actually to assist the King in this just War with their own Persons, and to endeavour by their Prowess and Courage, to lay his Enemies prostrate at his Feet. For it is not imaginable, that any King whatsoever can withstand the insults of his Enemies, or protect his Subjects without their assistance and presence with him.

(3.) That we should pay a just deference, and an honourable respect to the memory of those worthy Persons whom the hand of the Enemy hath unfortunately slain in this War, particularly in the Reduction of that City and Castle for which we now give thanks; that we should speak well of them and thank God for them; for that they spent their Blood in the defence of their Country, lost their Lives in a just Cause, and dyed upon the Bed of Honour.

(4.) Lastly, that we should thankfully acknowledge our selves obliged, as to all those in general, who actually fight for us; so particularly to the King himself, who hath exposed his own Person to all the Fatigues and hazards of the War; who, like *David*, himself doth fight the Lords Battles, whose vigour in action is more quick than the Lightning of his own Cannon, whose Magnanimity and Conduct, whose Prudence and undaunted Courage, have gain'd him Immortal Renown in the Annals of Fame, and

Jud. 8.
34. 35.

made him to become a terrour to his Enemies. To Him especially who hath hazarded his Royal Person and Life in the Defence, and for the Honour of our Church and Nation, we should pay our thankful acknowledgment in a dutiful return of Honour and Faithfulness towards him; which if we should fail to do, we might justly be reproached for our ingratitude like as were the Children of *Israel*, who *shewed no kindness to the house of Jerubbabel, namely Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.* His very Presence in the Camp animates our Forces with new Life and Vigour, and therefore when he is pleased to be at the head of our Armies, unless by our Sins and Rebellion against God, (unless by our ingratitude to him and the King, we provoke God to disappoint our hopes, and blast our Undertakings) we need not doubt, but that through God's Blessing, we shall do Valiantly, and tread them under that rise up against us. To his Matchless Valour and wise Conduct, next to the Mercy and Goodness of God, we owe our Preservation from the direful effects of our Enemies Rage and Malice. And therefore returns of Gratitude are due; first to God as the Author of all our Successes, and then to him as the glorious Instrument whereby he works them.

III. And thus I come in the third place to consider the Success we have had in this War, particularly this last Summers Expedition, which gives occasion to this Days Thanksgiving.

We cannot indeed as yet truly say that we have totally vanquished and overcome our Enemies, but I hope I may say truly in the words of my Text, that through God's Blessing we are *waxed stronger and stronger, and they wax weaker and weaker.* For what places have they

they gain'd of us this or the last Years Campaign, as they have formerly done at the beginning of others? Nay have they not lost much ground this Summer? and is there not a plain stop put to the Enemies Career? Have we not by the bravery and resolution of our Forces and our Allies, Retaken that strong, that most Important City and Castle, which our Enemies two Years ago did take, and could no otherwise take from us than by Fraud and Treachery? Have we not retaken them in the face and under the sight of a numerous Army of the adverse Party, who came to be the inglorious Lookers on of the loss they sustain'd thereby? Where is that Bravading-Navy, that once or twice appeared upon our Coasts, and threatned us with an Invasion? 'Tis plain, that they sculk, and shelter, and hide themselves in their lurking-holes, out of which they dare not, they cannot with safety look forth. But as for our Navy, hath not part of it Victoriously danced on the British Ocean, stopping upon the Avenues of the Enemies Ports and Havens, and with considerable Success attacking the chiefest of their Sea-Coast-Towns? and doth not part of it ride triumphantly, at this Day, in the *Mediterranean*, putting thereby a check to all their Pride and Glory? God at present seems to have put his Hook (as he ^{2 Kings} once threatned to do to *Sennacherib*) into the Nostrils ^{19. 28.} of the great *Leviathan*, that for so long a time hath taken his pastime in the deep. He hath given a terrible Rebuke to the aspiring Fortune and Fury of the Enemy, by the Success of ours and our Confederate Forces, both by Sea and Land. So that now we may hope he will in a little time begin to hearken to a Peace; nay, that he will be brought to such a condition, as to be forced to seek and desire it; to which
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he hath hitherto been as deaf as the Adder that stoppeth her Ears. For the Lord hath now pulled down the high looks of the Proud, and levelld the haughty Stomach; he hath clipt his Wings in his tousing flight, and brought him nearer to the ground; he hath put the Heathen in fear, and made them to know themselves to be but men.

But that which Crowns our Success, and is the glory of our Triumphs, and the chief cause of this Days-Thanksgiving, is that it hath pleased God to preserve our King from the many dangers to which his Royal Person was expos'd, during the late Siege, and in all his publick Expeditions for our Safety, and for the deliverance of our Suffering Brethren; that he hath kept him under the shadow of his Wings, from falling into the hands of his Enemies, that he hath covered his Head in the Day of Battle, and been a Wall of Defence to him on every side. What a deplorable and fatal blow would it have been, not only to this Nation, but to the most considerable part of Europe, if He, the Head of the Confederate Allies, had by any means been cut off? If He, the Prop and Stay of the Protestant Religion, had any ways suffer'd by the hands of those that hate him? How would they have rejoiced to have been made Masters of His Life, whose Death would be their greatest advantage? how would they have triumph'd in His ruine, which only could have given Life to their dying Cause? But now how will they be astonished and amazed, how will they shake and tremble, when they shall see him once more besieging some of their strongest Towns; or at the Head of a Gallant Army, in the open Field, (Him whose very name is enough to strike them into a Panick Fear,) when they shall see

see him once more arm'd, not so much with his own Forces, as with the strength and right hand of the Almighty? Blessed therefore be God who hath given prosperity unto his King, and hath delivered David his Servant from the peril of the Sword.

IV. And this leads me to the Fourth and last head of my present Discourse, and that is *concerning the effect which our Success in this War should have upon us.*

(1.) And first it should fill our hearts with an holy Joy in the remembrance of the loving-kindness of Almighty God towards us: for should we not rejoice and exult when we consider that God is still mindful of us, that he hath not yet left off to do us good, and that he gives us every year fresh instances of his concern on our accounts? Is it not a ground of exceeding great comfort to receive so clear, and so many pledges of his love and favour express in such watchful care over us, such Protection in times of danger, such Success over our Enemies, such deliverance from their Spight and Malice? Such publick Benefits as these cannot. I am sure they ought not, to be received without great chearfulness and gladness of heart. We are all of us, or at least should be, concern'd for the Publick Good, as being living and sensible Members of the State, and are like to partake both of the good and ill fate thereof. And therefore how can we look upon or hear of any prosperous Issue of God's Providence over our Nation, of any happy Success with which God hath blessed our Publick Undertakings, without great delight and complacency?

(2.) The Success with which God hath blessed us, should

should also excite us to praise and bless God for it. For God's Favour towards us will not have its due effect unless it fill our Mouth with Praise, as well as our Heart with Joy. We should look *beyond the Hills from whence cometh our help*, beyond the efficacy of second Causes, and search out the *Primum Mobile*, that secret sacred Wheel of Providence which winds and turns about humane affairs as it pleaseth: Then shall we be ready to acknowledge with David, *that it is not our own arm that helpeth us, but the right hand of God, and his arm, and the light of his countenance because he hath a favour unto us.*

It is necessary indeed that towards the achievements of great Exploits, or the encountering of formidable Enemies, great Preparations should be made, Arms and Money (the strength and Sinews of War) should be provided, and considerable Forces raised. For God (who makes use of second Causes to produce his own wise designs) works by these towards the defence and safeguard of his People; and we can no more reasonably expect, that God will help a Nation or Kingdom, without their own concurrent endeavours, than that he will recover a Man out of a dangerous Sickness, without the application and use of proper Remedies, or relieve a Man in distress and want, without his own Industry and Care. But then we must not impute our Victory and Success purely to any Prowess, or Conduct, or Wisdom of our own, but to the great God *who teacheth our arms to war and our fingers to fight, who guides our Councillors, and teacheth our Senators Wisdom, who presides over Battles, and gives not always Victory to the strong and craty, but oftentimes to the weak and feeble; who pulleth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble*

ble and meek; who alone giveth Victory unto Kings, and delivereth his Servants from the hurtful Sword. Upon the consideration therefore of the good Success we have hitherto had, as we cannot but ascribe the accomplishment thereof to God's good hand of Providence, so we are bound to make a grateful acknowledgment of it by our hearty Thanksgiving unto him, saying with the Royal Psalmist, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise for thy loving-kindness, and for thy truths sake, for we know that no King or People can be saved by the multitude of an host, and that no mighty Man is delivered by much strength.*

And we have great reason to praise and bless Almighty God for our late Success, if we either look upon it as the gracious return of our Prayers and Fasting, or if we reflect upon our unworthiness of it.

First, If we look upon it as the gracious return of our Prayers and Fasting. For we prayed and humbled our selves by fasting, and implored the Blessing of God upon our Forces, and upon our King throughout his Expedition; and he hath been graciously pleas'd to hear our Prayers, and hath granted our desires; by giving us good Success, and protecting the King in the day of Battle. *Blessed therefore be God who hath not withholden the request of our lips, Blessed be God who hath not cast out our Prayer, nor turned his Mercy from us!*

Secondly, let us reflect upon our unworthiness of it; when we consider our many great and high Provocations of Almighty God, our unthankfulness for former Mercies, our Incurribleness under all the judgments which God at several times hath brought

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upon us, and when we withal reflect upon the goodness of God in having thus blessed and prosper'd us, notwithstanding such our unworthiness of it, can we forbear to praise God, saying with the Holy Psalmist, *Thou Lord hast forgiven the offences of thy people and covered all their sins; thou Lord hast dealt graciously with thy servants; be thou therefore exalted in thine own strength, so will we sing and praise thy power.*

(3.) Moreover, the Success we have had should engage us to trust in God for the future, and never to doubt that God who hath appear'd so much, and so signally stretched forth his arm on our accounts, will now leave us; but to hope with humble confidence, that he will still continue to do great things for us.

(4.) It should also oblige us to newness of Life, and better Obedience towards God. For fresh instances of his goodness do call aloud upon us, to shew forth his praise, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, by giving up our selves to his Service, and walking before him in holiness and righteousness all our days.

(5.) Lastly, The Success we have had against our temporal Enemies, should put us in mind of the contest we have with our Spiritual, and that as we are Christians we are engaged in a War far more dangerous, and of far greater consequence than any we can have with our most inveterate Foes upon Earth, in which if we are overcome, we shall be reduced to a worse condition than all our other Enemies can ever bring us into; in which if we get the Victory, we shall gain Immortal Life and Glory in the Regions above, in comparison with which, all the Trophies and Spoils, all the Riches and advantages we can obtain

tain over our Enemies here, are but inconsiderable trifles.

When we were baptized into the Faith of Christ, we took upon us to fight manfully against Sin, the World, and the Devil; these are our most formidable Enemies, with which we must have no Peace so long as we live upon Earth; with these we must not so much as enter into a Truce, or think of doing so; nay 'tis extremely dangerous even but to parly with them. We carry a War continually about with us, *the flesh warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these two are contrary the one to the other; we have a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, endeavouring to bring us into captivity to the law of sin:* We have Lusts and Passions which War in our Members, and there are *fleshy lusts which war against the Soul.* A Christian Man's Life therefore in this World is a state of continual Warfare, and the Church of Christ it self is but Militant here upon Earth.

Let therefore our Success against our temporal Enemies encourage us to get the better of our Spiritual. What a shame will it be for us to conquer those, and to suffer our selves to be led Captive by these? What disgrace is it to let Sin reign in our Mortal Bodies, when we can so easily subdue our other Enemies? What a sad exchange of a Victory would it be to beat our Enemies so as that they *wax weaker and weaker*, and yet to suffer our Lusts and Passions to *wax stronger and stronger*? O therefore let us watch and stand fast in our Faith, let us quit our selves like Men, like Christians, and be strong. Let us take unto our selves the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to withstand all the assaults of our Spiritual Enemies;

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Let us gird our loins with truth, and put on the Breast-plate of righteousness; let our feet be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace; and let us take the shield of Faith; and the Helmet of Salvation; and the Sword of the Spirit which is the word of God: And let us withal humbly beg the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit and Grace, which then will not fail to strike in with us; and then we need not doubt but that we shall overcome all our Enemies of what nature soever they be. Then, when we have fought a good fight, and finished our course, and Successfully ended our Warfare here, we shall enjoy an Eternal Jubilee of Peace, Rest and Glory in the happy Regions of Immortality.

Which God of his infinite mercy grant to you, and to me, and to all Mankind, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and one most Glorious God, be ascribed by you and by me, and by all our Fellow-Creatures, all Honour, Praise and Glory, lasting now and for evermore. Amen.

FINIS.

Sermons Written by the same Author.

AN Affize-Sermon Preached in the Cathedral-Church of St. Peter's in York, March the 8th 1685. on Judges xvii. 6.
The Duty and Obligations of serving God. A Sermon Preach'd before the Queen, at White-Hall, July xxix. 1694. on Joshua xxiv. 15.